

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated November 2, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Applicants have amended claim 6 and canceled claim 7. Applicants respectfully request the §112 rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-11 and 15-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoshi in view of Machida and optionally Cram. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Examiner alleges that the presence of elastic members on both the upper and lower stage and chamber units would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, but Applicants respectfully disagree. First, a reading of Satoshi and Machida would render it counterintuitive to place elastic members in both the upper and lower stages and chamber units, because Machida implies that the member 108 at the lower portion of the chamber provides sufficient elasticity for what is needed. It would not be obvious to add other elastic members at the upper part of the chamber (or the upper chamber unit as recited in the claims) because that would result in too much elasticity, unless the member 108 at the lower portion is changed. However, there is no teaching or suggestion of doing this in any of Machida, Cram, or Satoshi, and thus one must conclude that the cited references teach away from elastic members at the upper and lower chamber portions, and that the cited references do not teach, disclose or suggest such structures as are recited in the independent claims.

Accordingly, claim 1 and claims 2-5, 8-11, and 15-20 which depend from claim 1, are allowable over the cited references.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: January 31, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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